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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6370
INFO RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RHHJJPI/PACOM IDHS HONOLULU HI
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1710
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 4635
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 3848
RUEHNEH/AMCONSUL HYDERABAD 0524
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 2106
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 6004
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 2554
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 9460
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI 3674
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 NEW DELHI 000850

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: SRI LANKA UNREST, TERRORISM; NEW DELHI.

This countrywide cable reports on relevant media reaction/opinion from India's large non-English press. The Mission reports on English-language media via email through the daily "Early Edition" summary.

SRI LANKA UNREST

¶1. "CEASEFIRE OR TEMPORARY TRUCE?" editorial in April 28 centrist Marathi daily LOKMAT: "The temporary de-escalation of violence in Sri Lanka has come as a relief to many political parties in India.... What caused Sri Lanka to take this step? Did pressure from India play a role? Or did the central government in India put in a political request to Sri Lanka in order to save a political ally's future (the DMK party in Tamil Nadu). Or was it international pressure on the Lankans? One has to wait for answers to all these questions."

¶2. "SRI LANKA WINS THE WAR, BUT..." op-ed analysis in April 28 Mumbai edition of centrist Marathi daily SAKAL by Dr. Shantishree Pandit, professor of political science: "China has congratulated Sri Lanka for its victorious expedition against the LTTE. China had provided modern arms to Lanka for the war. In addition, China is also helping Sri Lanka financially, with a fivefold increase-to \$1billion-in support over the last year. China is also helping Sri Lanka build its military infrastructure. India needs to take a firm stand, therefore, in regard to the Sri Lankan problem and its repercussions felt so

strongly in Tamil Nadu."

¶3. "POLITICAL SETTLEMENT ONLY WAY OUT IN LANKA," op-ed in April 28 independent, centrist NAVBHARAT TIMES Hindi daily by columnist Avdesh Kumar: "The Sri Lankan government's victory over LTTE is imminent. It was clear ever since the government forces captured Killinochi last year.... Both the government and LTTE's victory is possible as long as one large ethnic group feels short-changed."

¶4. "THE TIGER IS SNARED THIS TIME," op-ed in April 28 nationalist DAINIK HINDUSTAN Hindi daily by columnist Praveen Kumar: "The Tamil tigers are responsible for the deaths of over 70,000 people in Sri Lanka. V. Prabhakaran, the LTTE supreme, is billed as one of the worst terrorist-criminals in the world. But whatever the world may think of the man, his subjects worship him. It is being said that Prabhakaran has already gone underground and this present action by the Lanka government will not yield his head. Prabhakaran is not even afraid of death, and he and his cadre are forever ready with their cyanide capsules. Truly they are a formidable lot, but the battle is now at a decisive stage, and the tiger seems to be have been snared this

NEW DELHI 00000850 002 OF 002

time."

TERRORISM

¶5. "OSAMA AND PRABHAKARAN: DEATH MYSTERY BEGINS," editorial in April 28 centrist Gujarati daily DIVYA BHASKAR: "While President Zardari has said that the dreaded fuqia;T&Qn cornering Prabhakaran? We are equally concerned because both these men are representatives of extremist ideologies who have spread the tentacles of their nefarious activities in a way that has claimed the lives of innocent citizens. Although the Sri Lankan army is determined to crush this menace once and for all, Zardari faces a dilemma as he has been put on notice by the U.S. itself to act against Bin Laden and Al Qaeda."
BURLEIGH